

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



ABDALLAH'S ESCAPE FROM THE BEDOUINS.

THE STORY OF A DIAMOND.

CHAPTER X.—REST IN THE DESERT.

EARLY next morning, the camel-driver told Abdallah that he must go in search of the Bedouins, whose tents they passed on their way, for the stock of bread was very small, and the fodder for the camel, though he had a little herbage here, would not last long; and who could tell how long they might have to stay? Besides, the water would give out; and this was the greatest danger of all. The boy, at first, tried to urge his waiting one more day; he said his master was better, and the

Bedouins might, perhaps, be hostile, and rob them; if they could travel on without applying to such dangerous assistants, it would be a great matter. But the man would not listen to his arguments, and, mounting his camel, rode off, while Abdallah sadly returned to the little tent, where, on looking at the jar of water, he was obliged to allow that it would have been imprudent to delay seeking for more.

His master, he still fancied, looked better; inexperienced in illness, he did not observe his increasing weakness, and only saw that he was quite sensible and more calm than before. He told him of the camel-

driver's departure, at which Hossein seemed rather glad, for he said—

"I wished to speak to you, my boy, while I can, and all the morning this man sat close to the tent watching us. My fever is better now, but I am weaker, and I feel certain I shall not recover."

Abdallah began to cry bitterly at this, and to pour out words of affectionate contradictions; but his master said—

"Listen, my son; I must speak while I can. Will you do all I tell you?"

"Oh, my dear master, my father, I am your slave! Only speak, I will do what you desire, as if an angel from God told me!"

"Well, then, take this," said the merchant, feebly drawing a purse from his silk waist scarf; "the Bedouins are less likely to search you than me; keep it, and if you can get back to Cairo and find my friend Asaad, wherever he is you must find him, and give him the book which lies here, and my tobacco bag, as a remembrance of me. Here is my watch, boy, for you; keep it for my sake. I meant to have reared you, and done well by you, poor child, but God's will be done. Oh, Abdallah, believe in Christ—He is the Saviour alone—and read the Gospel. I am too weak to say what I wish."

So saying, he again dropped his head speechless from exhaustion, and the weeping Abdallah laid a wetted handkerchief on his forehead, and with some difficulty made him swallow a few drops of water. Then he secured the little bag of embroidered cashmere, shabby from age and use, which lay in a corner of the tent, tied it up with the money in a piece of rag, and buried it and the watch in the sand, marking the place with a stick among the bushes; he then returned the purse, with some coppers in it, to his master's belt. This prudence was nothing wonderful in an oriental boy, especially in one early left an orphan; and it was no sign that he did not truly feel the grief he expressed. These precautions finished, he sat down, and patiently watched the sick man hour after hour; but Hossein neither spoke nor moved, though his breathing was quicker and more laboured than before. At last, feeling the tent oppressive, and seeing that the palms were casting a tempting shadow on the flowery sand (for the sun was now low), the boy softly drew the carpet on which his master lay outside the door, as the opening in a tent is generally called, and let the fresh breeze which had set in with the decline of day blow on his fevered cheek. It seemed to revive him, for he first smiled in his sleep, and then awaking called to Abdallah to bring him "the book"; he tried to look on the page, as the boy held it up before him, opened where a leaf had been turned down, but it was memory rather than his failing sight that allowed him to repeat "in my Father's house are many mansions!" He closed his eyes with a smile so bright, so unlike his usual sad expression, that Abdallah was awestruck, and held his breath to hear the faintly-murmured words that followed, "Your joy no man taketh from you;" "none shall pluck them out of my Father's hand,"—there were more words, but the voice was too feeble for the boy to hear. Laying the book gently on his master's breast, he went to fetch water, but hearing voices in the distance, he paused for a moment, and looked out between the trees. Several Bedouins and camels were approaching; it was evident that they must have been on their way when the driver met them, and now in a quarter of an hour they would be here! He hurried back to his master with the pitcher in his hand, feeling half relieved and half frightened, but Hossein seemed asleep. The book had fallen from

his breast, and lay at his side, one hand resting upon it, and the same wonderful smile was upon his features that they wore two minutes before, when the boy left him. "I cannot disturb him; perhaps he is not thirsty now," said Abdallah to himself, half aloud; then he looked again, and the peculiar stillness of the face struck on his mind,—it was sleep indeed, but the sleep of death. Yes, the weak brother had been called from conflict to enter into peace!

CHAPTER XI.—RETRACING OUR STEPS.

It was a long time before I took my place again on any one's finger. Buried deeply in the fine Latakia that filled the merchant's tobacco bag, my presence was not detected by the boy Abdallah, who, to do him justice, was too full of grief at his kind master's loss to think of opening the bag. Besides this, as he had never been allowed by him to smoke (Hossein thinking the habit very bad for so young a lad, though many younger practise it in Egypt), there was no temptation to abstract a pinch for himself; and, to keep it out of the sight of the Arabs, he carefully hid it, as well as the book and watch, in his waist scarf, when a favourable opportunity occurred for digging them out of the sand unperceived. The tent of his poor master had been of course rifled, and great was the displeasure expressed at finding nothing beyond the carpet and clothes of the deceased. They insisted on searching the boy, thinking he might be in possession of money; but found only a small piece of silver; and, after vainly ransacking the camel-furniture, they were obliged to believe the driver Hassan's assurance that the merchant had given his property in charge to his companions of the caravan, and that the purse with a few coppers in it, which they had discovered in his dress, was the only thing left. Hassan was anxious to convince them of this, because, if they proceeded to search him, the sum paid him in advance, which was not an inconsiderable one, would be confiscated without mercy, he knew. These men were not of his own tribe, and, though not positively hostile, he had no expectation of finding them either just or generous; and he determined, now that there was no inducement to remain, to get away, and return to Cairo as quickly as possible, accompanied by the boy, if he were willing. As to going on to Aleppo, now that the promised reward could not be expected, he never thought of doing so; he took, therefore, the earliest occasion of privately communicating with Abdallah, and found him very ready to start at a moment's notice. The Bedouins having already supplied him with a small quantity of bread and dates, he had only to fill his skin with water, and get his camel ready. But as Hassan guessed that his departure might be opposed, he thought it best to begin by feigning sleep, and watching their movements. It soon appeared that he and his young comrade had no time to lose. When they appeared by their breathing to be sound asleep, the circle of Bedouins who were crouched round the fire began to speak of them, and one observed that there certainly must have been some more money than those few paras with the merchant, and probably a watch or some jewels, and that they ought to search in the sand under the tent as soon as daylight came; and another added that the boy or the driver might be forced by fear and a good beating to tell if they had hidden anything.

"Hassan will not be able to leave us if he wished it," added another, in a whisper, "for I tied his camel to two of ours, and fastened the rope to a palm-tree."

But Hassan was of the same race, and was up to their wiles. After a time, he roused himself as if

suddenly, declared he had had a strange dream that frightened him, and, squatting beside them near the fire, related it, or professed to do so, and then went on to tell many lively anecdotes, and set them all laughing and talking till they became heartily tired and sleepy, in spite of a little coffee which, to gain their goodwill, he had produced and shared with them. While he had been distracting their attention by his coffee and stories, Abdallah, who had been quite forgotten, had slowly and cautiously rolled himself along upon the ground till he reached, unseen, the palm where the camels were tied, and with a pocket-knife severed the rope with which Hassan's was fastened. His buried treasure he had already secured. The creature, on finding itself free, wandered off to browse in the valley, its soft feet making no noise in the sand, and the fire being now mere embers, and the night, luckily for them, not moonlight, there was nothing to reveal the fact.

One by one the Bedouins lay down, and covered their faces, as their custom is in sleep, and after perfect stillness had prevailed for some time, Hassan joined his young companion, who by this time had rolled himself quite outside the camp, but in the agreed direction, so that the darkness was no hindrance to their meeting. While Hassan sought for his camel among the bushes, the boy wiped away a fresh flood of tears, as he stumbled over a rude hillock of sand which marked where his beloved master's remains lay; and a vague feeling of disappointment came over his mind as he thought of what Hossein had told him of going to the New Jerusalem—the heavenly city after death. He had, indeed, often heard of the soul, and of its separate existence, but he was ignorant and childish, and the whole subject seemed to him uncertain, dark, and sad. He could not think of his master except as lying under the sand, with jackals and hyenas prowling about him, and the thievish Bedouins appropriating his silk scarf, and the carpet which he so lately lay on, and everything that he had left.

"If he really has white robes, as the book says, I wish I could see them," he said to himself, with a suppressed sigh.

Alas! poor Abdallah, it is only the eye of faith that can see these things; wiser and more learned than you fail to see them.

Presently his thoughts were recalled to the necessities of the moment by a touch from Hassan on the shoulder. Silently they made their way out of the valley, leading the camel. The rustling of the palm-branches in the night breeze prevented the slightest alarm being given, for that soft sound completely drowned the faint noise which their passage through the brushwood in almost total darkness made unavoidable. Safely, therefore, they reached the open desert, mounted the camel, which was not laden, and could easily take both of them. Before dawn of day they were quite beyond pursuit, as the Bedouins had no horses with them. Had they possessed a fleet Arabian steed, the fugitives might have been easily overtaken, as their camel's footprints showed their route plainly enough. As it was, they were unmolested, and spent the next few days in retracing their steps towards Cairo. It was a weary journey, as their store of provender for the camel was small, and they were obliged to let him browse wherever desert plants were to be found, though it somewhat delayed their progress. Their own provision was also scanty. They had eaten the last morsel, and were totally without water, when they reached the first village on the borders of the desert, and were enabled, to their great joy, to procure food and to rest for a night and part of the next day.

Hassan was then all ready to pursue his journey, but Abdallah, to his astonishment, positively declined going any farther, saying he was exhausted with fatigue, and must have a longer rest. This was perfectly true, for he was not a Bedouin, accustomed to desert travelling from his youth; but he had another reason for desiring to separate from the camel-driver. With the caution and independence which his early experience of life gave him, he had considered that, if Hassan knew he had any money with him, he would be very likely to rob him of it, as well as of his poor master's watch. Perhaps his suspicions were unjust; and Hassan, who had certainly been kind to him on the journey, might have been unwilling to strip the orphan of all he possessed; but those who know much of Bedouins will scarcely feel inclined to blame Abdallah's prudence in carefully concealing his little treasures from his comrade, though his fears, by making him sleep with one eye open, as the saying is, rendered his fatigue greater than would have otherwise been the case.

When they had argued for some time, and Hassan found him quite resolved, he appeared to give up the point, and went to get his camel ready, but returned when all was complete to announce his departure, and to try a last attempt at persuasion. Whether he really suspected the boy of possessing any valuables, and thought he could extort them from him before entering Cairo, or that he wished for him as a witness to the truth of the story he was going to relate to the friends of the merchant, we can never ascertain; but all his efforts were vain. He found the boy much too comfortably situated to be at all inclined for another journey just yet. A peasant woman in the village had been struck with compassion for the wearied and half-starved lad, who resembled, as she thought, a son she had lost only a year ago. This kind-hearted creature had taken him into her hut and spread her own wadded quilt on the mat for him. Here Abdallah was rolled up to his heart's content, with a bowl full of sour milk by his side for his refreshment during the intervals of slumber. The good woman sat at the door meantime, winding thread, while two very dirty children played at her feet in the dust, and her grown-up daughter dandled a little baby clad in rags, and with features scarcely discernible through the mud that covered its face. A stranger might have supposed them in the most wretched state of poverty; for, besides the dirt and rags of the children, the hovel was of the lowest description possible, and the rubbish and litter all around would have conveyed ideas of utter discomfort and misery to any civilized eye. But they were not poor; both women wore a quantity of gold and silver on their necks and arms, and on festival days the family would feast sumptuously in their way, and even purchase expensive articles of dress; but ignorance, alas, reigned in that village, as in all Egyptian villages, and cleanliness, order, and proper dwellings were neither known nor wished for! Abdallah had been reared in a similar place, and, though he could see that it was not exactly like his master's house, still he was far from feeling any contempt for the mud hut; and, indeed, after long exposure to a broiling sun, almost any one would enjoy even the shelter of an Egyptian peasant's dwelling. No wonder, then, that the poor boy's sleep was sweet, and that he gladly accepted the kind offer made him by the widow woman. He stayed two days longer under the shade of her palm-tree, spending his time chiefly in sleep; and on the third morning he set out with her son-in-law and two other peasants for the city.

After a walk of two days (for they went on foot, except for an occasional lift on the laden donkeys the

peasants were driving), making short and easy journeys, they arrived in Cairo just as the sun was setting. It was not more than sixteen days since Abdallah had left it with his master and the caravan, but no wonder that it seemed to him as if months had passed; and it all looked so different that this feeling was increased, for they had started with a fine north wind blowing, and now the fiery khamseen held its sway. The trees looked withered and parched; the dust blew in clouds, darkening the air; the breeze scorched instead of refreshing; and the sun was sinking to rest in a whitish haze which dimmed its parting glories. The people, indeed, were as active as ever, for the hot wind does not appear to be trying to natives; but the face of nature was changed; and, as he looked at the dull sunset, the poor boy murmured to himself, "My sun is set in clouds also," and his tears flowed at the idea.

CHAPTER XII.—THE ROTHESAYS AT HOME.

THE khamseen wind was still prevailing, and indeed was stronger than ever, when Abdallah knocked at the door of a house in a narrow street of the city, between eleven and twelve o'clock in the morning of the next day. Clouds of dust were flying everywhere, and even the Egyptians kept in doors, unless business forced them to face the sand storm. The door was opened by a sleepy-looking old servant in a shabby turban, who pointed across the court and then lay down again on the ledge which formed his resting-place by night and day. Abdallah found his way into an upper room, where a Coptic lad rather older than himself was sitting at a desk writing, and asked for Mr. Asaad.

"I think he is in there," replied the youth (who had a sullen expression, though he looked clever), pointing with his pen to a half-open door, and instantly resuming his occupation.

Abdallah went where the pen directed, and entered a large room or hall scantily furnished, but cool and pleasant in hot weather, from its very emptiness. A divan was at one end, covered with faded chintz, but neatly arranged; a few pretty sketches in water-colours hung on the plain whitewashed walls; a bureau with pigeon holes for papers, and a table in the middle of the room, were the only pieces of furniture, and, as well as the few chairs, were of the plainest description; but the floor was paved with marble, and the roof bore traces of having been once beautifully ornamented. It was, in fact, one of those old houses formerly splendid but falling into decay, and let at a comparatively low rent, from their situation in close narrow streets making them less sought for than far inferior dwellings in more airy parts of the town. This house had, however, the advantage of a good-sized court, in which grew a nebbuk (or jujube-tree), the foliage of which is very pretty, with its small glossy dark green leaves, though at the time Abdallah crossed the court it was anything but a pleasant object, being dusty and withered-looking from the hot wind that now swayed its branches to and fro. On entering the large room which looked out on this court, Abdallah perceived a gentleman, whom he recognised as Mr. Rothesay, seated at the table busily engaged in folding and directing letters, while beside him stood his wife assisting his work by sealing and stamping them as fast as he handed them to her. Neither of them perceived the boy, he had entered so softly and stood so motionless at the door.

"There! I believe we are through with the business at last!" said Mr. Rothesay, with great satisfaction, "thanks to your help, my little wife. And now tell me what you have been doing all the morning, for, as I had to go out so early, I have not seen you, I may say."

"Oh, my dear Robert, I am ashamed to tell you how idle I have been; it is now half-past eleven, I declare, and I have done nothing. I am disgusted with myself; it seems so idle to be fit for nothing because it is a *khamseen*, but really till you called me and said Mr. Asaad was out, and you were in a hurry with the letters, I fancied that it was quite impossible to do anything but lie on the sofa and pretend to read, and then get up and look at the clouds of dust, and sigh, and puff, and pant, and say, 'Oh, how suffocating!' and then lie down again."

Mr. Rothesay laughed at this picture.

"What a magic power I must have," said he, "to be able to rouse my poor Kathleen from such a dismal condition. But, my love, you are new to these hot winds, and they are very trying to all foreigners at best; I care less for them than many, yet I own to feeling languid to-day, and perhaps nothing save the call of duty would make me exert myself."

"But it is horrid of me to be so lazy, when I have so many duties," said the candid Mrs. Rothesay. "My Arabic lesson to study, and not a word do I know of it, and Asaad was quite cross last night because I was not prepared—and some eye water I had solemnly promised that poor washerwoman I would make for her child, and a letter I ought to have written for post! and the cook will give us I don't know what for dinner, because when he came to speak to me I told him to leave me in peace!"

At this last confession Mr. Rothesay's smile changed to a look of alarm, and he asked quickly what she had said.

"Just tell me the words, my dear."

She obeyed in some surprise.

"And so you literally told him to leave you in peace? A fine business you will have made, I am afraid."

"Why, what was there wrong in that?" asked the lady.

"He will, perhaps, leave his place in consequence," replied her husband; "for what is in English a comparatively mild expression, happens, in the Arabic idiom, to be considered an insulting expression, equivalent, as I suppose, to 'go about your business,' or 'get you gone;' and as no one when he is angry stops to recollect that a foreigner may have made a mistake and is not to be blamed for ignorance, the chances are that Alce is now in a towering passion."

"Dear me, what a terrible language!" cried poor Mrs. Rothesay, half crying, half laughing at herself. "Do fly to the kitchen, dearest husband, and make the humblest apologies, for if the cook leaves us I must dress the dinner myself, and, with the thermometer at 95 in the shade, that is not a pleasant prospect."

Mr. Rothesay at once rose to comply with this request, and then observed Abdallah, who was still standing at the door. With a kindly manner, very unlike the rough surly tones which many Europeans think it necessary (I wonder why?) to assume with Egyptians, he asked what the boy wanted, and on his answering that he wished to speak with Mr. Asaad, told him to wait and to sit down on the mat near the door meantime, "for you look very tired," he remarked as he went out.

Mrs. Rothesay remained, being afraid to face the cook, and began to question Abdallah; for there was something forlorn and sorrowful in the boy's expression that touched her kind heart. He was very reluctant to speak at first, but at last she extracted some little information about his recent journey and the death of his master (of which she understood but half), and then the fact that he was an orphan. The tears came to his eyes as he spoke of his desolate condition. "Poor boy, I am very sorry for you,"

said the gentle lady. "And did you know Mr. Asaad formerly? and did he ever tell you that God is a father to the orphan?"

"Yes, certainly," replied Abdallah; "he taught me a great deal, and I know how to read."

At this moment Mr. Rothesay returned, and found his wife so much interested that she would hardly listen to the account he brought of his difficulty in pacifying Alee, whom he had found sulking in his den of a kitchen, his fire not lighted yet.

"I am so glad, dear—but now do talk to this boy—my poor Arabic is nearly exhausted, and I do not understand above a third part of what he tells me, and I long to know his story, for I make out that it is about a merchant dying in the desert. Oh, here is Asaad; he will find it all out!"

"Yes, my love, and while he catechises the boy, do you go and speak to Alee; for really I don't deserve to fast after my exertions in your behalf."

"Very true," replied his wife, "I am very ungrateful; but I will take care that you have something good, and as quickly as may be; I don't feel languid now, I almost think the thermometer has fallen a degree or two!" So saying, the lady vanished from the room, not, however, without casting a lingering look at Abdallah, who was standing silent and sorrowful beside the divan where Asaad had just taken his seat.

A few kind words from his old friend soon opened his heart, and his grief burst out afresh as, leaning his head on the divan, he sobbed out that his master was dead—his dear kind master—and that he had no one to love him now!

By degrees Asaad drew the whole story from him of Hossein's death in the desert, and his own escape from the Bedouin horde, and journey to Cairo. Whatever Mr. Rothesay could not understand, Asaad rapidly explained in English, so that both were deeply interested in the details, and yet more so when, after a little recovering himself, he drew from his bosom the Testament and the little bag, and gave his master's message about them, and showed the place of the turned-down leaf, telling them how he had died with the book in his hand.

"Ah, my dear friend," exclaimed Mr. Rothesay, observing Asaad wiping the tears from his eyes, "you may thank God, indeed! I do believe this 'weak brother' that you so often prayed for is safe with the Lord. As David says in the Psalm, 'Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I flee away and be at rest. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.' Who knows but he was allowed thus to flee away, because the world and its trials and dangers were too much for him—and he was permitted, as we may say, to flee to the wilderness and there to find rest?"

"Yes," replied Asaad, "you say true, sir: God 'tempered the wind to the shorn lamb.' I am indeed glad rather than sorry at these tidings, only it affects me a good deal, for I pitied and loved poor Hossein. His book will be dear to me, and his little bag I will never part with, for his sake." So saying, he put it in his pocket (unconscious that it contained a jewel), and then proceeded to consult with Mr. Rothesay in English as to what should be done with the lad. It was soon settled that for the present he should stay where he was, receive a reading lesson every evening from Asaad, if he had leisure to give one, and run errands by day for Mrs. Rothesay, and accompany her donkey when she went out riding.

"I have no doubt at all of her consent to the plan," said Mr. Rothesay, "only I must warn her not to spoil

the boy," he added, smiling, as he sent Abdallah to get something to eat in the kitchen, and returned to his usual business with his clerk, who, as he sat down to the desk, could not help pondering for a minute ere beginning his accounts, on the difference between civilised and uneducated women. He thought how happy his employer was in having a Christian companion, lively and well instructed, like Mrs. Rothesay, and wished that the sweet girls of his country (his own pretty little sister especially) had such advantages as would make them also helpmeets to their husbands, instead of merely house-servants or playthings.

"I must really speak to the lady about my sister some day," said he to himself, "and that will be better than losing my time in thinking now, when I have business to attend to." So, dismissing the subject bravely, he plunged into the accounts.

THE VATICAN TESTAMENT.

BY D. H. COWPER.

(Editor of the Journal of Sacred Literature.)

THE New Testament was originally written in Greek, and the separate books of which it is composed were rapidly copied and circulated by the ancient Christians. It is not exactly known when all these books were first collected into one volume, but it seems to have been early in the second century. Most likely, indeed, the oldest collections of New Testament books did not contain them all, but only such as had reached the compilers. The precious volumes thus produced were sent everywhere as the Christian law of life and rule of faith, and it was not long before they were translated into such languages as Latin and Syriac, which, with the Greek, brought the New Testament within the reach of nearly all nations, from Persia in the east to Gaul in the west, including the shores of the Black Sea, and the civilised portions of Africa. In those early days the entire Church was one Bible Society, and the Scriptures were circulated as widely as possible.

The primitive Christians were very anxious for spiritual results, because they knew the preciousness of Christ and of souls. But many of them were not learned, and in their haste to multiply copies of Holy Writ, they suffered them to go forth with frequent errors, which sounder judgment would have corrected. The consequence was that the great scholar and critic, Origen, some two hundred years after the birth of Christ, found it necessary to compare a number of copies in order to make a variety of corrections. But, notwithstanding his labours, human infirmity often stumbled, and what are called "various readings" went on multiplying. As the Church increased, it included a large proportion of learned and wealthy members, and these sought to procure copies of the Scripture which were very costly and splendid. Constantine the Great ordered a number of such handsome Bibles to be prepared for the use of different churches; and it is thought by some that the famous Sinaitic MS. is one of these. If so, it is probably the oldest Greek Bible in existence, and a visible proof of the zeal and liberality of those distant ages. But there is at Rome another manuscript, which, in the opinion of Dr. Tischendorf, the greatest living authority in such matters, was written by one who wrote a part of the Sinaitic Bible. This Roman copy is called the Vatican manuscript, from the place of its preservation; and we have no doubt many of our readers would like to have some further information about it.

By way of preliminary, it may be stated that the Vatican manuscript contains the Old Testament in Greek, and the greater part of the New Testament in the same language. How or when it got to Rome is not recorded, but it was most likely placed in the Vatican library by Pope Nicholas v, rather more than four hundred years ago. This Pope was very much given to collecting old books, and he employed persons to procure for him the rarest and most ancient manuscripts. He was the real founder of the Vatican library, which has since grown to be one of the largest and best in the world. But, although Nicholas is believed to have procured the celebrated manuscript we have under notice, it is never mentioned till about the time when Erasmus and some others had begun to print the New Testament in Greek. Before taking leave of Pope Nicholas v, it may be mentioned, as a fact not generally known, that he instructed Giannozzo Manetti, his secretary, to prepare a completely new translation of the Bible from the original. We are not aware that the new version was ever made, but the fact shows that Nicholas did not hold the opinions of his successors about the translation of Jerome. He would have set aside the Latin Vulgate probably in favour of his own, and then the Roman Catholics of our day might have had a very different edition of the Bible as their standard. Finally, we are not aware that any Pope since Nicholas v has ordered any translation whatever of the Bible to be made. The versions into modern languages have been made without papal command, and most of them have been published without papal approbation.

To return to the Vatican manuscript. The existence and great value of this book were known at the very beginning of the Reformation, but, for reasons which have never been stated, the Papal Government did not permit any edition of the New Testament portion to be published until 1857. What that edition was may be gathered from a review written soon after: "The work is well and handsomely got up. The type is very good, and the paper very stout, and capable of being written on. The text of the MS. is comprised in five stout quarto volumes, of which four contain the Old Testament, the fifth the New. The Old Testament — the Septuagint translation — is, of course, valuable, having never before been correctly published; but the New Testament is, beyond all comparison, that which renders this work so especially important. On this account it is much to be regretted that the one cannot be separated from the other. The Old and New Testaments must be bought together. As the cost of the whole work is rather considerable — nine pounds — this is a serious matter to scholars, a race not usually burdened with wealth." The Old Testament portion of the Vatican MS. was published as early as 1586, but, we repeat, the New Testament was kept back till 1857, and could even then be purchased for not less than nine pounds, for the cause stated by the reviewer. Protestants should connect this fact with another, which is, that *until 1857 not a single Greek New Testament was ever published at Rome*. That city, which claimed to be the depository of Holy Writ, and to be the centre, head, and soul of the Church, never sent forth a copy of the Greek Testament till three hundred and forty years after Luther began his labours. And when the book appeared, it was at a price which forbade all but the wealthy to purchase it. It is needless to repeat that, as the New Testament was originally written in the Greek, the publication of a copy from a MS. fifteen centuries old was exceedingly desirable in the interests of Christendom.

It might be supposed, however, that, if the Papal Government would not allow their venerable New Testament to be published, they would suffer scholars and students to use it. This also would be almost wholly a mistake. Mr. Scrivener observes: "Tischendorf says truly enough that something like a history might be written of the futile attempts to collate Codex B, and a very unprofitable history it would be." The opinion prevailed at one time that Pope Leo x lent this Vatican MS. (or Codex B) to the editors of the Complutensian Bible, but it is more likely that the Pope did not let it go to Spain. In 1533 a Spanish theologian and historian, Sepulveda, who had spent much time at Rome, wrote Erasmus a letter containing a short account of the Vatican MS. He says: "There is in the Vatican library a most ancient Greek book, wherein are contained both Testaments, very carefully and accurately written in capital letters, and very different from the common copies." Sepulveda supplied Erasmus with a number of various readings in support of his assertions, and for a long time these readings were all the practical acquaintance the world had with the MS. The eminent critic Wetstein reminds us that Erasmus heard of this document as early as 1521, because in that year Paulus Bombasius consulted it at his request. Curiously enough, the passage which led to this was 1 John v. 7, 8, where the Vatican MS. contains less than our copies, and runs to this effect: "Because there are three who bear witness, the spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one." When Mai's edition appeared in 1857, it was found that the common modern reading of this passage had been left in the text, while the reading of the MS. was put into a footnote! This was hardly fair, because, whether the disputed words are genuine or not, they are not in the Vatican MS.

After the time of Erasmus, the Reformers much wished either to procure a copy of this extraordinary book, or a correct account of its readings. Theodore Bibliander wrote to say that he had promised for a copy as much money as might be required; but he never got what he wanted. Some years later, a Dutch student made certain notes which were turned to account by Lucas Brugensis, a Flemish critic and a Roman Catholic. So far as publicity was concerned, there was a pause at this point for nearly a hundred years, although it would be a mistake to say that the MS. was forgotten, for twice at least in the course of the seventeenth century it was more or less perfectly collated. Again, in the eighteenth century, collations were made at the cost of our eminent countryman Bentley; and these bring us almost to the end of another hundred years, for Birch's collations were not all published till 1798, nor Bentley's even in part till 1799.

For eighty years past, especially, there has prevailed at Rome what Mr. Scrivener calls "the system of jealous exclusion of strangers from their choicest books." Yet, during that time, there has been a greater anxiety to examine ancient MSS. than ever before. There was, indeed, one golden opportunity, but it was not properly improved. In 1809 the celebrated manuscript, with other precious treasures from the Vatican, was taken to Paris. It was then examined and minutely described by Dr. Hug, a German critic, and yet it was allowed to remain and to return to Rome uncopied and uncollated. Henceforth it was so much a sealed book that when Tischendorf, in 1843, wished to consult it, "after long and anxious expectation, during a visit to Rome that lasted some months," he only obtained a sight of it for two days of three hours each. In 1844 another gentleman

got the use of it for nine hours; but in 1845, when Dr. Tregelles went, they only allowed him to *see* the MS., without writing anything. "They would not let me open it," he says, "without searching my pocket, and depriving me of pen, ink, and paper. . . . If I looked at a passage too long, the two *prelati* would snatch the book out of my hand." Yet Dr. Tregelles had letters of recommendation from Cardinal Wiseman!

Even since the publication of the Roman edition, we have met with many stories of the sort already told. Here is a specimen, where the details are rather suggested than stated, by the Rev. J.W. Burgon:—"Though I saw it several times, I never but once had the opportunity of carefully and critically inspecting it. How it happened that this one opportunity was but of an hour and a half's duration, and fell on the very last morning of my stay at Rome—so that I had literally to decide whether I would leave Rome without packing up my things or without making a hasty collation of Codex B—I forbear to explain. It were an uncongenial task; an ungracious as well as a most ungraceful proceeding. Rather would I record that I owed the privilege entirely to the prompt kindness of one of the most enlightened scholars and accomplished gentlemen in Rome—the Cavaliere G. B. De Rossi." The hour and a half permitted to Mr. Burgon was eagerly improved, and the notes he then made were read with interest by many. He remarks that it is well known the MS. omits Luke xxii. 43, 44; John v. 3, 4, vii. 53 to viii. 11, and the last twelve verses of St. Mark's Gospel; but he adds it is not so generally known, with reference to this last omission, that more than a whole column is left blank after Mark xvi. 8, "thereby intimating, in the most eloquent manner possible, that there has been something consciously left out, for that blank column at the end of St. Mark's Gospel is the only blank column in the whole Codex."

It may be noted that Cardinal Mai, who edited this MS., died before its publication, and it was really given to the world by Father Vercellone. When Canon Wordsworth was in Rome, in 1862, he saw this gentleman, who, he says, in one of his dissertations had remarked upon the singular fact that before the appearance of Mai's work the Church of Rome had never given to the world an edition of the Greek Testament in the city of Rome itself. The learned Italian regrets the fact, because, "if Rome had published a New Testament in Greek, that edition must have been the standard edition." Dr. Wordsworth properly asks: "If the Church of Rome can give to the world standard editions of the Bible, how is it that she has never yet published an edition of the original Hebrew of the Old Testament?" Our answer would be that, as the religion of Rome rests not on original but on second-hand authorities, it is not likely to publish the Scriptures in their original tongues. The Romanists boast of their Church as the great keeper and publisher of the Scriptures, but Rome never published the original of the New Testament till 1857, and has never published the original of the Old Testament at all! The exceeding importance of this fact must be our excuse for so often referring to it.

Mr. Burgon's letters were published before Canon Wordsworth's visit to the Vatican, and it may be due to them, and reiterated revelations of a like character, that a more liberal practice prevailed, and that the Canon was readily allowed to examine the manuscript. Some time before this, Dean Alford was permitted to use it. He says: "I had access to it for five days in 1861, and examined some hundred or two of doubtful places; but five days' work in Rome is equal to not more than two

days' in England, the nominal library hours at the Vatican being only three, and the real ones not more than two and a quarter."

By this time the reader will begin to get weary of a string of little scraps about people who went to see the manuscript, and who did not half succeed: how about the successful men, and the book itself? As for the successful men, there have been the librarians of the Vatican for four centuries, but they did not care to enlighten the world on the subject. Somewhere about 1828, however, the late Cardinal Mai was authorised by the Pope, Leo XII, to bring out an edition. Mai did not hurry himself; and when he did work, it was quite negligently. But eventually his edition was printed, and Tischendorf saw a volume of it in 1843. But, although printed, it was like the "notable prisoners," Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, of whom Bishop Latimer told the people, as we read in the history of our English Reformation. What was the cause? Partly the extreme and childish reluctance of the Papacy to publish a New Testament which differed so frequently from the Latin Vulgate, and partly a proper feeling of shame that the printed copy was so full of errors. The reluctance was to some extent overcome, and when Mai was dead, and his work had been mended, the book was set free. This was, as we have said, in 1857. Mai died in 1854.

After all, the book swarmed with blunders, which were reproduced in cheap copies printed abroad. There was a general expression of annoyance, astonishment, and disappointment that a work which the Christian world had demanded so long, and which had been executed by a cardinal at the command of the Pope, should be so miserable a performance, after almost thirty years' waiting. The issue of a small and not expensive edition of the New Testament from Rome soon after was a confession that the first was a failure; but, while it corrected some mistakes, it perpetuated others, and added new ones. In truth, Rome was a novice at publishing Greek Testaments, and her early attempt betrays her "prentice hand." Happily there is now a power in opinion which can make its voice heard within the very Vatican; and we have the assurance that the celebrated manuscript shall be published in a splendid fac-simile edition, column for column, line for line, letter for letter. This assurance will be realised, whatever difficulties may be conjured up.

We come now to the successful exploit—for so we must term it—of that most remarkable man, Dr. Tischendorf. He has himself told the pleasant narrative of his visit to the Pope, and his labours in the Vatican upon the famous manuscript, as the readers of the "Leisure Hour" will well remember.* It is needless to repeat the details, but the learned writer mentions a trustworthy edition of the Vatican New Testament as soon to be issued from the Leipsic press; and, as that edition has since appeared, we will conclude with a few words about it, and the features of the MS. from which it is taken.

The readers of Dr. Tischendorf's personal narrative will quite understand that he was not suffered to effect all he aimed at, but, during the time he had, he accomplished more than most men could have done. He was enabled to correct Mai's edition, in all its essential features, by the original MS., and also to take notes of several matters previously unexplained. The results are chiefly exhibited in an elegantly-printed quarto volume, with a Latin introduction and notes. We say

chiefly in this volume, because another handsome and rather costly book has been published, in which, among other things, Dr. Tischendorf gives us twenty pages of a fac-simile edition of the manuscript, in the ancient character, line for line, and letter for letter. These twenty pages will convey to students who have not seen the work a more correct idea of the appearance of the original than they could otherwise have had.

Dr. Tischendorf's edition of the Vatican Testament is in ordinary Greek type, but without punctuation and accents. A number of the pages are printed in columns, to show the structure of the manuscript. The remaining pages are so printed as to show the beginning and end of every column of the MS., and they all have foot-notes, to indicate the alterations or corrections which have been from time to time introduced. We gather from the arrangement that the New Testament portion of the text of the MS. occupies 284 pages.

In his introduction the learned editor first presents us with an account of his own labours, and of those of his predecessors. He then proceeds to enter upon a detailed description and investigation concerning the MS. itself. The book is a square volume of vellum, with three columns of writing on each page. The letters are of the ancient form, called uncials, or capitals, which are seldom joined together. The ink has faded till it is of a yellowish brown colour; but some one has restored the greater part of it by re-touching the letters with a pen. There are very few stops, and the words usually run on without any division between them. A small number of ornaments has been introduced, and the initial letters of the paragraphs have been rewritten, of a larger size. Numerous corrections have also been made at different times. Taking all things into account, Dr. Tischendorf is of opinion that the book was originally written earlier than the middle of the fourth century, or before A.D. 350. It is, therefore, one of the oldest books in the world, and of great value as a witness for the readings and form of the New Testament among the early Christians.

Infidels have made much of the circumstance that the primitive fathers of the Church do not often call the writings of the Evangelists by the name of Gospels. Now it is a noticeable fact that in the Sinaitic MS. the word "Gospel" is not placed at the head of either of the Gospels, although it is inserted at the end of three. In the Vatican MS., again, although the title of each Gospel is put both at the beginning and end of each, the word "Gospel" is not introduced once; the titles being simply, "according to Matthew," "according to Mark," "according to Luke," and "according to John." We do not wish to lay undue stress upon this peculiarity, but it favours the opinions of those who think the Evangelists did not originally call their books by any special name.

With regard to the actual contents of the Vatican Testament and the order of the books, it may be observed that the four Gospels come first, and are followed by Acts, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, Hebrews. This last breaks off at chap. ix. 14. The remainder of the New Testament part is lost.

There are various numbers in the margin showing the sections or divisions which the ancients adopted. St. Matthew has 170 of these sections; St. Mark, 62; St. Luke, 152; St. John, 80; Acts, 36; James, 9; 1 Peter, 8; and so forth. But it is a really curious circumstance that St. Paul's Epistles were treated as one book: thus,

Romans ends with section 21, and 1 Corinthians begins with the next number, 22. From this peculiarity we learn another interesting fact, which is, that at one time the Epistle to the Hebrews stood between Galatians and Ephesians. In the Vatican Testament, Galatians ends with section 58, and the next book, Ephesians, begins with section 70, which shows that 12 sections have been removed, but when we come to Hebrews we find that it opens with section 59. The conclusion is obvious—that a change had been made in the order of the Pauline Epistles, although the sections had not been re-numbered. The value of this fact lies herein—that it shows the position assigned to the Hebrews among St. Paul's Epistles at a very early period.

There are still a great many things which we might say about this world-famous book; but, as we do not profess to be writing for critics, we shall draw to a conclusion. Here is a copy of the New Testament which the best judges agree in telling us is above 1500 years old. So far as it goes, it contains the same books as we now read; and, although it exhibits many various readings, a few of which are confessedly important, it substantially agrees with our English Bible. The various readings which are most important are of two kinds—those in which portions of our text are not found at all, and those in which a different word is used. There is nothing in the MS. to indicate that any change has been made in the canon of the New Testament, or that we have lost any part of the primitive text. Even the passages which we have, and the Vatican has not, are well understood by critics, and can be traced back to a very remote period, some of them two centuries beyond the date of this precious document. Our own opinion is that, while the peculiar readings of the Vatican Testament are entitled to all respect, they are not to be received as infallibly correct. We must leave the ultimate decision to those who have made a study of the science of criticism. Meanwhile, we watch their labours with profoundest interest, and are thankful that Providence has not only preserved unto us the treasure of his saving truth, but the identical "earthen vessels" in which it has been lodged for 1500 years. There is little doubt that this book was written as far back as we say, and in Egypt, where it might be kept for ages without much difficulty. Eventually it wandered to Rome, and there it remains, guarded with jealous care; but the mere fact of its existence and well-verified antiquity has been of real service to the Christian cause. Dr. Tischendorf has enabled us to hear and understand it better; and we trust that, ere long, copies will get abroad into the world so perfect that every letter, every jot and tittle, may be within the reach of every Biblical scholar.

TEETHING.

THE joke about some people being born with their teeth is not wholly without foundation in fact. There are such cases on record, though they are rare. Usually it is about six months after birth that the first teeth make their appearance; as it was six months before birth (so physiologists tell us) that the process of formation commenced. The dentition may begin in the third or fourth month, or may be delayed till the tenth or twelfth, but the common time is between the sixth and seventh. Whenever it comes, it is a time of trouble to baby and every one around. Happy the child that gets through its teething without restless days and sleepless nights. The degree of the distress is often said to be a good test of the constitution, as well as of previous good



THE VILLAGE DENTIST.

management in diet and regimen. It is not so, however, in all cases. Sometimes a delicate child gets through with little trouble, while a lusty child suffers severely.

For a month previously the symptoms of irritation and inflammation commence; pain, heat, redness, swelling. A certain amount of feverishness is invariable, but this may be accompanied by a variety of symptoms, alarming to the mother, and requiring medical advice. An experienced nurse will not call for the doctor's help on account of mere gum rash, or other skin eruption; nor for simple laxness of the bowels, nor for cough, nor for startings in sleep. Gentle laxatives, and other familiar remedies, with the warm bath, will suffice for most of these ordinary ailments. It may be remarked in passing that the sudden checking of the looseness, or throwing in of the eruption, may lead even to convulsions, and, therefore, caution must be used and advice taken. For, if severe spasms or fits supervene, or if the fever increases so as to threaten disorder in any vital organ, more decided interference is necessary. The speedy subsidence of every untoward symptom after scarifying the gum is wonderful. In a few minutes the child often passes from fearful prostration to a state of manifest relief and cheerfulness. Where the irritation has affected the mucous membrane of the intestines, the danger may be greater. Dr. Ashburner mentions a case where death in three weeks was caused by the aggravated diarrhoea and extreme emaciation in an infant that had within eight days cut eight teeth.

The sixteen temporary or milk teeth appear usually in pairs, those of the lower preceding the corresponding pairs in the upper jaw. The intervals between the arrivals of the groups are extremely variable, as is also the order of coming. The common course is to have four incisors, followed by four grinders, then the dog-teeth, with the eye-teeth last.

The permanent teeth usually begin to appear about the sixth year, the front molars leading the way, followed at seven by the central incisors, at eight by the lateral incisors. The remainder gradually come until the twelfth or thirteenth year. The wisdom teeth are most irregular in their time, though usually appearing before the twentieth year. Instances are frequent at all ages. Mr. Kempton, in his "Anatomy of the Teeth," mentions his lately having seen a patient who cut her wisdom teeth at seventy years of age.

Of third sets of teeth there appear to be well-authenticated cases on record. "They tell a tale," says Lord Bacon, as if doubtingly, "of the old Countess of Desmond, that she did twice or thrice cast her teeth, and that others came in their room." But other cases confirm the tale. In the "Philosophical Transactions," vol. xxviii., Dr. Slare affirms that his grandfather had a third set at eighty-five, and lived to the hundredth year of his age. Instances of single teeth coming in old age are far from uncommon. Hufeland, Easton, Sinclair, and other writers on longevity give details of these cases.

It is always advisable that the permanent teeth should be inspected from time to time by a professional man. In most cases the milk teeth fall out without any trouble, the fangs and sockets having been in process of absorption long before, till the crowns have only slight adherence to the gums. Sometimes, however, either from insufficient growth of the jaw, or from the non-absorption of some of the old fangs, or from other accidents, there is not room for the free course of the new teeth, and artificial help must be used to prevent permanent irregularity. Except when required for this purpose, the artificial removal of the milk teeth does

more harm than good, for the earliest of the new set may thus advance with more speed than naturally, and thereby take more than their due share of room, and throw the next comers into irregularity.

The painless extraction of teeth, under the influence of chloroform, and more recently by the local application of ether spray, is a wonderful improvement over former practice. The anæsthetic art was evidently unknown to the village dentist of our illustration. Some of our readers may have seen a picture of "Toothache in the Olden Time," where one of the retainers in a baronial hall is sitting in visible and helpless misery. Dentists were unknown in those "good old times." At the same time, it must be confessed that toothache was rarer. An old churchyard was opened for a road or other purpose many years ago, at Scone, in Perthshire, and the parish minister told Sir John Sinclair that there was not an unsound tooth in the heads which he examined. Savage tribes of mankind have better teeth than civilised nations. Whether this is due to diet, or to the general influences of artificial life, the fact is undoubted. What effect various articles of diet have on the teeth, and habits such as smoking, seems undetermined. Sugar is commonly supposed to be injurious, yet the negroes of the sugar plantations, who luxuriate in the sweet cane, are noted for their beautiful ivories. The writer knew an old lady who enjoyed her tea both hot and sweet for nearly fourscore years, and died without having lost a tooth.

DISILLUSION;

OR, MARY OF THE MILL AND THE COUNTESS MARIA.

CHAPTER XII.

WHAT a rapid change in George's life! Yesterday he had made his way, scorned and humiliated, out of a country inn, to return to his modest, ill-furnished lodging, and wait patiently till some peasant should lay claim to his services. To-day he walked about on velvet carpets, was served like a prince, and sat on an easy chair by the side of the bed where, on fine snow-white pillows, and under a crimson canopy, lay the loveliest maiden form, and where even pain and illness seemed to appear under a pleasant aspect.

If he had yet needed a humiliation of his rival, to comfort him for his late defeat, he had an opportunity to enjoy the fiendlike pleasure of revenge. Scarcely half an hour after the unfortunate young lady had been brought into the castle, the grand head-doctor drove up. He had heard of the accident on the road, and came, puffing and panting, to introduce himself to the Countess, and to present the letter of introduction from the court physician in the capital.

The stout, asthmatic doctor, notwithstanding the grandeur of his appearance, and the brilliancy of his gold chain, was no welcome apparition to the fearfully excited Countess, who, with all the impetuosity of her nature, had already begun to regard the young doctor as a helping deity. In her imperfect knowledge of German, and feverish impatience, she could not think of any polite forms, and could only bring out the words, "I do not want you—already a very good doctor—now go away, and do not disturb my daughter. John, show the gentleman the way out." And the servant very officiously took the doctor by the arm, and literally led him out of the house, so that his panting afterwards must have been fearful to hear. George was too deeply taken up by his present task to spare time in the secret triumph which the servant's account of the scene raised for a moment in his breast.

But he would not, and could not, brood over these feelings. His interests as a doctor and as a man, all the thoughts and volition of his soul, were now concentrated in the one desire and struggle to save his patient. There he sat for many long hours, day and night, with his eyes fixed on the beautiful pale countenance, anxiously thinking, seeking, striving to find something which might bring hope or relief.

He was now very glad that, during his student days, through intercourse with a student in the next room to his own, he had acquired some knowledge of the French language, that universal medium of communication; it was, therefore, possible to converse with the Countess, who spoke German very imperfectly.

He had to put up with her wild outbursts of despair. All the preconceived ideas which he had learnt from his geography book at the gymnasium were completely overthrown. He had always heard and read that the Spaniard is stately, proud, and cold in his outward demeanour; that he will never commit a breach of etiquette, even when his inmost feelings are highly excited. This lady did not answer to the description, as she often gave way to the most unbounded passion, and even forgot her tenderness to her sick child, in the expression of her maternal anxiety. All her passionate complaints, all the grief with which, at first, she had lamented over her child, had reached his ears; he had also heard the words with which she had accosted him on the first evening, when the unconscious invalid was being carried into the house, and which she had often repeated since—"Save my child and she shall be yours;" and the words had strangely thrilled through him. Though he often said to himself, "Nonsense! she says it all in her excitement, and forgets it directly; and, if she were in earnest, her words would have no meaning for me," he still heard those words again in the silent hours, when he fixed his gaze on those dreamy, wonderful eyes, which even in their unconsciousness beamed with a sweet enchanting lustre.

The young Countess lay in a violent fever, even when the danger resulting from loss of blood was over. She was never conscious; he could not understand her ravings, as she spoke Spanish, and he did not seek to understand them; but he fixed his gaze again and again on those mysterious eyes—rather oftener perhaps than was necessary for his medical study. He saw in them the whole glow of the soul, and he thought them such as he had seen only in Murillo's Madonnas. The name of this lovely being, whom her mother gave to him for his own, perhaps only to lay her in the grave, was Maria. How weak Mary, the German Mariechen, sounded in comparison! He had not much time to think about that; he had not even thought of writing to Mary till news reached him from Pulverdingen that some one had inquired after him. The wonderful story had naturally spread abroad that the young Doctor Rau, who before had had nothing to do, had become household surgeon to the Spanish Countess. He now wrote a few hasty lines to Mary, to tell her the story of the last few days. He assured her, with truth, that he had neither time nor composure enough to write oftener; for he had neither.

He had plenty of resources. Medical books, medicines, and restoratives for the invalid, were brought to him on the shortest notice. Such an utter indifference to expense as he saw here would once have appeared impossible. One thing only was not done: in spite of all the hints and questions of the servants, in spite of the misgivings of his own conscience, no other doctor was called in. The Countess did not demand it. It might have

been that she reposed a superstitious confidence in the young doctor, who had appeared like an angel of mercy, in her time of need; or perhaps that she thought all the German doctors were like the stout head-doctor, of whom she had a special horror. She did not demand, and George did not propose it.

It was not so much the ambition of a young man who wishes to accomplish his first great achievement for himself; it was rather a desperate struggle for life and death, to be waged incessantly, the motives of which he could scarcely explain. This only is certain, that he pledged his whole life, and brought into play all the powers of mind and body, that he might save the life of the girl whom death was claiming for his prey. He allowed himself no rest by day, little sleep by night, or refreshment, scarcely needful food; he knew no wish, no hope, nor fear, excepting for his patient. The successful issue of his treatment was certainly the first object with him; but, along with this, sad illusions of folly were beclouding his spirit.

CHAPTER XIII.

GEORGE had not the slightest idea how long he had been in his enchanted castle; whether there was rain or sunshine, spring or winter, outside, he could not tell. But, in the world beyond, and around the Bush Mill, it was autumn—a richly blessed autumn, in which all busy hands must labour. Mary—our Mary of the Mill—had not enjoyed much of the pleasures of autumn. It was true that the grandes of the town often invited her to their little festivities. She was engaged, it was said, to a doctor; she was pretty well off, and had received her education in the capital; and her friends were always ready to pay a return visit at the Mill. Mary refused every invitation: she felt like a flower severed from its stalk, when she had to move in these circles without her father, her mother, or George. She had become very quiet lately, but she was still very active in household labours, though she did not often work at her *trousseau*.

One day she had been busily engaged in the garden and the flax-field, and she was wearily returning homewards, with a basket of dried flax on her arm.

"There is a letter for you," said her brother Christian, who now lent efficient assistance in the Mill.

"Lord, preserve my ears from evil tidings!" the miller's wife had read that morning at prayers. Why did these very words occur to her when she saw how Mary's hand trembled in breaking the seal, and how her child turned away from the others, and sat down by the window to read the letter?

The miller, who was taking his evening meal, was not troubled by any dark forebodings.

"So it is from that youth George," he said, not ill pleased. "It is time that he should write again. Let us see whether he has cured the Countess, and succeeded in persuading her that a lady should not ride on horseback. He is a brave fellow, not to have let any other doctor in. I am only surprised that the old lady should have allowed it. Well, she will pay him handsomely, and the cure will give him a good name. You will have to bring out your bales of linen, wife."

While her father quietly talked on, Mary had read her letter, and folded it up, and had gone up-stairs to her own room. Her mother had seen her go, but had not followed her. Only when the miller asked, "Where is Mary? what is in the letter?" his wife went up-stairs after her. Mary was on her knees before her chair, with her face buried in her hands. Her mother came softly behind her.

"Mary, do you not know the answer of the Virgin?"

An angel may come to us, who brings us no good tidings."

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord," said Mary, in a low voice, without looking up—the words were checked by her sobs.

"Do not say it yet," said her mother: "do not say it till you can say it from your heart; and you know where to look for help and comfort in every time of trouble." So the fond and pious mother went down quietly to her husband and son, and said, "Leave Mary alone; she is very tired. To-morrow you can read the letter for yourselves."

George wrote the whole story of his meeting with the Countess, her illness, and her mother's promises.

"So now I have told you all, dear Mary," he continued; "and you see how little I have myself done to bring about the circumstances which have placed me in such a peculiar position.

"Maria, the young Countess, is out of danger, beyond all my hopes and expectations; and I am thankful for it a thousand-fold. It was a bold venture on my part to undertake the cure alone, considering how little experience I have had. Maria is still exceedingly weak, but she manifests a most touching confidence in me, as I am almost the only person from whom during the last few weeks she has received anything.

"I have told you, Mary, of the strange promise which the Countess, in the first excitement of her maternal grief, made to me. I ascribed it to her impetuous, passionate nature, to the maternal anguish which would compel me, by unbounded promises, to exert my powers to the very utmost. So, now that her daughter seems so far restored, I spoke to her about it, and released her from her promise. But the Countess, in her overflowing gratitude, would hear of no refusal. She assured me that Maria herself had become accustomed to the thought of our union; that she owed all to the man who had saved her life; and that any sudden separation might prove fatal to her.

"And now, what shall I do? Shall I say to Maria, who has really given herself up to me in childish devotion—when a rough blast from within or without might break and kill the tender flower—shall I say to her, 'You are deceived; I am unable to love you; I belong to another;' or shall I allow her to continue in her deception, and permit this young unblemished spirit (she is scarcely seventeen) to give herself up to me in love and devotion? When will the right time come for me to tear myself away from her by force? When can I be certain that her delicately-strung nature will not be torn to pieces by so sudden a wrench? To fly from her at once and for ever would be the only thing left; and I cannot, I dare not leave her. She yet needs more complete sheltering and protecting care, and she will not be able to dispense with my attendance when, as soon as she is well enough to travel, she sets out for Italy, in order to avoid the rough autumn winds in this country.

"Mary, dear Mary, with your clear decided feeling—you who have ever been near me in sisterly love—tell me what I must do. I know that you will understand this state of things, though you have moved only in your own little circle. Your father will not understand me. He will think that I am only seeking for a pretext to break my word. Little he knows how dreadful the thought of a breach of faith is to me. Only with your full, free consent will I put an end to this engagement, which, alas! can as yet have given you no pleasure, dear Mary.

"So I will lay our future in your hands. I will act according to your decision, and will believe that it is God's will which speaks to me from your simple child-like soul. Whatever your decision may be, you will be not only the arbiter of my fate, but you must also be my champion with your family, as they will not be able to understand this extraordinary combination of circumstances.

"Do not misunderstand me, dear Mary. I shall abide by your decision, whatever it may be. I shall most likely need some time, after the very different circumstances to which I am now accustomed, to return to all the poverty through which, in your father's opinion, I ought to fight my way; but there will be an end of it soon, and I shall always find in you a true and faithful friend, even if our engagement is brought to an end before we can carry it out in will and deed.

"So, dear Mary, speak out your opinion openly; tell me what you think right, and I will do it. Believe that in any case I shall be

"Your devoted GEORGE.

"P.S. I wish that you could see Maria in her tender, wonderful beauty, in all the helplessness of her being. I am sure that you have never seen anything to equal it. May God grant that the tender flower may not fade away before recovery is completed. I also fear much from the excited condition of all around her, particularly of her mother."

Mary's answer was as follows:—

"I am very sorry, dear George, that you have tormented yourself so much with doubts and questions during the last few weeks. If you had known your own heart, or if you had known me aright, you might have spared yourself a great deal of trouble. You might have saved yourself all your anxiety by one simple word at the beginning. After what has happened, it is quite natural that you should fall in love with the young lady whom God has helped so wonderfully through your means. And it is still more natural that she should fall in love with you, when you had done so much for her. The only wonderful thing is that her mother should consent: such people are generally very proud, and think a great deal of rank.

"You know very well how I rejoice in anything that makes you happy. I have always been very sorry for all that you have had to bear, and the thought has often troubled me, whether it might not be better for you to be free from your engagement to me. So now go, in God's name, dear George, and may God bless and protect you and your beautiful bride!

"You need not trouble yourself about me or my parents. You know that my mother never wished to decide anything so long beforehand, and my father will not bear any malice against you, though he may be angry at first. If I am contented, he will be so too.

"Once again, I pray from my heart that God may bless you, and that he may preserve your bride in health and happiness.

"Farewell, George! Thank you for all the love and kindness which you have shown me; and if we never see each other again in this life, may God grant that we may meet in heaven! Then you will know that I have never wished you ill.

"Your faithful MARY."

The miller had certainly not taken the breach of faith with as much meekness and resignation as Mary had done. He stormed as he had never done before, since he married, at the faithless youth for whom he had done so much; but at last Mary's tears, his wife's entreaties,

and the simple consideration that there was nothing to be done, induced him to be silent.

While the whole town and neighbourhood echoed with the wonderful story of the poor doctor who had saved the life of a princess (a countess was far too insignificant a person for fame), and was about to marry her with her some millions of money; while the stout doctor suffered from a slight stroke of paralysis, brought on by his vexation; while the landlady of the hotel at H—— was considering whether, beside the boar which she had killed, she should not also illuminate her house, on the festal evening on which her own sister's son was to set out on his travels with a real Countess; while Herr Kolb, the happy step-father, was meditating whether, on the strength of the glorious relationship, he should not add a second business to the one which he had already undertaken, and Frau Kolb alternately melted into tears of joy at her son's happiness and of sympathy for poor Mary, for whom certainly there was nothing to be done—while all this agitation was going on, all was peaceful in the Mill. Mary and her mother had exercised so much of their influence over the miller that he was outwardly silent about the whole matter, although he had stormed loudly at first. He did not wish to see much of his friends; for when he had declared that his child would have nothing more to do with the lad, and had herself told him to go about his business, he had seen the scornful smile with which his announcement was received. There were some people to whom it seemed an honour for the miller's child to have been brought into competition with such a grand lady; but the miller was not one of these.

Mary received permission to go and stay with her old godmother at K——, who was weak and ailing, and almost blind; so a visit from the quiet girl might be very beneficial to her.

THE FAMILIAR NATURAL HISTORY OF INDIA.

BY AN OLD QUI-XYE.

NO. VII.—COMMON GARDEN BIRDS AND WATER BIRDS.

THE gaily-coloured birds of India are mostly those which belong to gaily-coloured natural families; and any species of those families which inhabit or visit Europe are as brilliant as the generality of their congeners: such are the kingfisher, the bee-eater, the roller, and the golden oriole; but, whilst one species only of each of these genera is known in Europe, there are several of each of them in India. The roller of that country (*Coracias indica*) is a very common and conspicuous bird all over India, of brilliant colours. To Europeans it is mostly known as the "jay;" but it is very different from the true jays (*Garrulus*), two species of which, akin to that of Europe, inhabit the Himalaya. The roller is the *nīl-khāt* of the natives, and abounds in all open places, preying chiefly on large grasshoppers, which it watches for from some eminence; or it is seen toying about on the wing, generally a pair of them, and often suddenly diving in its flight and recovering itself when near the ground. It has a characteristic loud single note, sounding like *tash*. Since the telegraph lines have been laid, both the roller and the ordinary "king crow" may very commonly be seen perched upon the wires, on the look-out for insects. The roller is one of those birds which are quite indifferent to the hottest Indian sunshine.

A diminutive kind of bee-eater (*Merops viridis*) is one of the very commonest birds of India, and abounds in the neighbourhood of Calcutta during the cold season. It is vivid green, with two long middle tail-feathers; and it sits very upright, as does also the roller, both of

them with the plumage much compressed, except that of the head. Several of these small bee-eaters may be commonly seen perched together on a twig, side by side, and successively darting after passing insects, whence this bird is commonly known as the "green flycatcher" to Anglo-Indians; the natives term it *bans-pata*, or "bamboo-leaf." Sometimes it hawks about in the manner of a swallow; and we have seen a flock of them hovering round a small pond, and successively plunging down like kingfishers, to seize aquatic insects. Not many stay to breed near Calcutta, but some remain at no great distance, perforating holes in banks and breeding in society, like sand-martins. Another bee-eater (*M. philippinus*), of the larger size of the European species, visits Lower Bengal during the rainy season, but not very many of them; and there are others in different parts of the country.

The species of kingfisher are numerous. One very common (*Alcedo bengalensis*) only differs from the European kind in being about a fourth smaller. A tank or pond in a garden will be frequently visited by this bright little bird. Another kind (*Ceryle rudis*), with speckled black and white plumage, is also commonly seen over larger expanses of water, hovering stationary in the air, like a kestrel-hawk, several of them being thus seen at the same time, and ever and anon pouncing on their fishy prey. As many as three species of halcyon, with round stork-bills instead of the angular heron-bills of the former, are more or less common near Calcutta; and two others, of great beauty, farther down the river, besides an additional type of kingfisher, the *Todirhamphus collaris*; and, as a rarity, there is also the very diminutive and beautiful three-toed kingfisher (*Ceyx tridactyla*). One very abundant is the large *Halcyon leucocephalus*, with its loud and familiar note, "peer-peer-pur," repeated often from a dead branch of some high tree; the equally large *H. amauropterus*, with a harsh chattering cry, is less frequent; and the smaller white-breasted *H. smyrnensis* is very common. All of these kingfishers have essentially the same habits, but the first one is the only hoverer.

Of the immense group of woodpeckers, only two are common in Lower Bengal, the golden-backed (*Brachypterus aurantius*), which particularly affects the stems of cocoa-nut palms, though far from exclusively; and a small pipit species (*Picus macei*). A bay woodpecker (*Microp-ternus badius*) is less common, and two or three others are seen rarely. The British wryneck is not an unfrequent winter visitant, but is little noticed by ordinary observers, as it is silent at that season. The hoopoe is also a tolerably common winter visitant; being there not persecuted, as here, by every gunner.

A pied water-wagtail (*Motacilla luzoniensis*), closely resembling the British species in form and habits, abounds in the cold season, and its appearance and lively chirrup afford generally the earliest intimation that the long-looked-for cool weather is at hand; together with the harsh chattering of a dull-coloured species of shrike (*Lanius phoenicurus*), which is likewise very common, and its particularly harsh notes sound musically as the welcome harbinger of a change of season at last, and some respite from the wearisomely long-continued heat. The British grey wagtail (*M. boarula*) is also common in Bengal in the winter season, as likewise two kinds of yellow wagtail (*Budytes*), one of which has already been noticed as accompanying in numbers every herd of cattle grazing. A pipit (*Corydalla rufula*) abounds in all grass-lands, similar in appearance and habits to the meadow pipit of this country; and in the open cultivated country, over the dry paddy-stubble, true larks

(*Alauda gulgula*) may be heard abundantly, very similar in habits and song to the British skylark; but of their existence hardly any Anglo-Indian is aware, at least of those whose permanent abode is in towns. There are indeed many kinds of lark, more or less musical, in different parts of the country.

The "hurrials," or green fruit-eating pigeons (*Treron*), must not pass quite unnoticed. Two kinds are common in Bengal, a larger and a smaller, and one or two others occur somewhat rarely. The plumage of all is vivid and unglossed leaf-green, varied with bright yellow, or in some also with lilac and bright orange colour. They are handsome birds, therefore, and have strong bills and capacious swallows, and also strong broad-soled feet. From the resemblance of their colouring to that of the foliage amid which they perch and dwell, they are, like parakeets also, seldom seen except when on wing; but if one happens to be desecrated, and is shot at, two or three will commonly fall which had remained unperceived by the gunner. The voice of these birds is very melodious, more or less so according to the species, and in one kind, known as the kokhila (*Sphenocercus cantillans*), is particularly so; but this is a Himalayan bird, which is occasionally brought down in cages and kept for the sake of its voice. When a banyan-tree (*Ficus indica*) has its small and flavourless figs ripe, it is resorted to by all sorts of frugivorous birds, as coëls, barbets, orioles, green pigeons, and various others, and the collector has only to remain quiet and watch to take his pick of them. He may load and reload, and there is no need of removing from the spot, for there are fresh arrivals continually; but, after all, the variety of species obtained will not be very great. The green pigeons are not held in much esteem for the table, their flesh being tough, and their skins exceedingly so; but the same faults apply to pigeons generally, unless very young, and parakeets are found to be much the same when brought to table.

The finch tribe, very numerous in the Himalayas, is chiefly replaced in the plains of India by the weaver-birds (*Ploceus*), and by the diminutive waxbills and munia grosbeaks. There are three kinds of weaver-bird in Lower Bengal; but one of them, in particular, is the "báya," so often tamed and trained throughout India. All are of about the size of sparrows, with a yellow cap in the male sex. The báya breeds in society, suspending its beautifully-constructed, retort-shaped nests most usually from the foot-stalks of the fronds of a fan-leaved palm (*Borassus flabelliformis*). They keep always in flocks, which maintain a continual chirping; and they feed on grain of all kinds, particularly rice and various grass-seeds. As Dr. Jerdon remarks, "The báya breeds during the rains, according to the locality, from April to September; but I am not aware if they ever have more than one brood. Its long retort-shaped nest is familiar to all, and it is indeed a marvel of skill, as elegant in its form as substantial in its structure, and weather-proof against the downpour of a Malabar or Burmese monsoon. It is very often suspended from the fronds of some lofty palm-tree; either the palmyra cocoa-nut, or date, or a bábul (*Acacia arabica*, or *Vachellia farnesiana*), or other tree will often be selected, in preference to a palm growing close by. Very often a tree overhanging a river or tank, or even a large well, is chosen, especially if it have spreading branches and scanty foliage. In India I have never seen the báya suspend its nests except upon trees; but in some parts of Burmah, and especially in Rangoon, the báyas usually select the thatch of a bungalow to suspend their nests from, regardless of the inhabitants within. In the cantonment of Rangoon very many bungalows may be

seen with twenty, thirty, or more of these long nests hanging from the end of the thatched roof; and, in one house in which I was an inmate, a small colony commenced their labours towards the end of April, and in August, when I revisited that station, there were above one hundred nests attached all round the house. In India, in some localities, they appear to evince a partiality to build in the neighbourhood of villages or dwellings; in other places they nidificate in the most retired parts of the jungles, or in a solitary tree in the midst of some large patch of rice cultivation."

As Dr. Jerdon's remarks coincide entirely with our own, and we even visited the very same bungalow in Rangoon which he alludes to, and as we cannot describe in better language than he has done, we shall quote further from him, that—"The báya's nest is frequently made of grass—of different kinds—plucked green, and sometimes of strips of plantain leaf, and not unfrequently of strips from the leaves of the date-palm, or cocoa-nut; and I have observed that nests made of this last material are smaller and less bulky than those made of grass, as if the little architects were aware that with such strong fibre less amount of material was necessary. The nest varies much in the length, both of the upper part or support, and the lower tube or entrance, and the support is generally solid from the point where it is hung, for two or three inches, but varies both in length and strength. When the structure has advanced to the spot where the birds have determined the egg compartment to be, a strong transverse loop is formed, not in the exact centre, but a little at one side. If then taken from the tree and reversed, the nest has the appearance of a basket with its handle, but less so in this than in the other species, which has seldom any length of support above. Various authors have described this loop or bar as peculiar to the male nest, or sitting nest, whereas it exists primarily in all, and is simply the point of separation between the real nest and the tubular entrance, and, being used as a perch both by the old birds and the young (when grown sufficiently), requires to be very strong.* Up to this time both sexes have worked together indiscriminately, but when this loop is complete the female takes up her seat on it, leaving the cock-bird to fetch more fibre, and work from the outside of the nest, while she works on the inside, drawing in the fibres pushed through by the male, reinserting them in their proper place, and smoothing all carefully. Considerable time is spent in completing this part of the nest, the egg-chamber being formed on one side, and the tubular entrance at the other, after which there appears to be an interval of rest. It is at this stage of the work, from the formation of the loop to the time that the egg-compartment is ready, that the lumps of clay are stuck on, about which there are so many and conflicting theories. The original notion—derived entirely, I believe, from the natives—was that the clay was used to stick fire-flies on, to light up the apartment at night. Layard suggests that the bird uses it to sharpen its beak on; Burgess, that it serves to strengthen the nest. I, of course, quite disbelieve the fire-fly story, and doubt the other two suggestions. From an observation of several nests, and the position occupied, I am inclined to think that it is used to balance the nest correctly, and to prevent its being blown about by the wind. In one nest lately examined there were about three ounces of clay in six different patches. It is

* We have seen bábul-trees in the middle of a rice-field covered with half-built nests of this kind, which are never finished, but seem to be formed, thus far, in gratification of the constructive propensity, like what the boys call "cock-nests" of the British wren. In a cage báyas will be incessantly at work with pieces of thread or the like.

generally believed that the unfinished nests are built by the male, for his own special behoof, and that the pieces of clay are more commonly found in it than in the complete nests. I did not find this the case at Rangoon, where my opportunities of observing the bird were good, and believe rather that the unfinished nests are either rejected from some imperfect construction, weak support, or other reason, if built early in the breeding season; or, if late, that they are simply the efforts of that constructive faculty which appears at this season to have such powerful effect on this little bird, and which causes some of them to go on building the long tubular entrance long after the hen is seated on her eggs." Dr. Jerdon thinks that two is the usual number of eggs, and that he has found three occasionally. "In those exceptional instances," he remarks, "where six or more eggs have been found, I imagine they may have been the produce of more than one bird. The eggs are long, cylindrical, and pure white. The *báya* is stated not to use the same nest for two years consecutively."

"The *báya*," continues the same excellent authority, "is frequently taken when young, tamed, and taught to pick up rings, or such like articles, dropped down a well, or to snatch the tikka mark off the forehead of a person pointed out. It is also taught occasionally to carry a note to a particular place at a given signal." The truth is, that the feats performed by trained *báyas* are really very wonderful, and must be witnessed to be fully credited. Exhibitors carry them about, we believe, to all parts of the country; and the usual procedure is, when ladies are present, for the bird, on a sign from its master, to take a cardamom, or sweetmeat, in its bill and deposit it between a lady's lips, and repeat this offering to every lady present, the bird following the look and gesture of its master. A miniature cannon is then brought, which the bird loads with coarse grains of powder, one by one, or more commonly with small balls of powder made up for the purpose; it next seizes and skilfully uses a small ramrod, and then takes a lighted match from its master, which it applies to the touchhole. All this we have personally witnessed, in common with most persons who have resided in or even visited India; and we have seen the little bird apply the match five or six times successively before the powder ignited, which it finally did with a report loud enough to alarm all the crows in the neighbourhood, while the little *báya* remained perched on the gun, apparently quite elated with its performance. Colonel Tytler mentions also the "twirling of a stick with a ball of fire at each end. This the bird turns in several ways round its head, making luminous circlets in imitation of a native practice, the stick being held by the beak in the middle." The ring-necked parakeet is also often taught to perform the same feat, and also to steal the tikka mark from the forehead; and it may be remarked that goldfinches and canaries are often taught to load and discharge a tiny gun in this part of the world, as our readers may have seen.

So much has been introduced about the *báya*, that little room is left for treating of one or two other small birds that we intended to notice. A beauty seen occasionally, especially about bamboo jungles, though sometimes in gardens, is the *shah bulbul*, or "paradise flycatcher" of the books (*Tchitrea paradisi*). The old males of this bird are white, with a black and crested hood, and two long streaming middle tail-feathers; the bill and orbital skin are blue. Younger males have similar long tail-feathers, but a chestnut colour replaces the white; and, in the females, which are rarely white, except on the lower parts, the middle tail-feathers are

but little prolonged beyond the rest. Akin to it is a very beautiful small deep blue flycatcher, with velvety black pall (*Myiagra azurea*), a winter visitant, which we have known to take up its abode in a large verandah for weeks together, feeding on the flies and mosquitoes. One of the fan-tailed flycatchers (*Lercocera fuscoventris*) is common about bamboo jungles, and comes occasionally into gardens. It is ever in motion, with wings and tail expanded, and it utters a pretty tinkling sort of song. A handsome redstart (*Ruticilla rufiventris*), akin to the British bird, is among the common winter visitants, frequenting gardens with old walls, or dilapidated buildings amidst trees.

Of more or less aquatic fowl, herons abound, of many species, particularly the beautiful white egrets, which are familiarly known as "paddy-birds," from their frequenting the inundated 'paddy,' or rice-fields; *pádi* being the Malayan name for rice, and a word which is foreign to every Indian tongue. Of the great white egret (*Herodias alba*), so much prized by British ornithologists, we have seen a flock passing over-head, above the salt-water lake near Calcutta, just beyond the reach of gun-shot. The birds flew well apart; but the multitude of them was prodigious; and their daily consumption of fish must be indeed enormous. There are two other purely white egrets (*Herodias egretoides* and *Herodias garzetta*), both plentiful in the same localities; also the common and the purple herons of Europe, and many others, especially one small kind with white wings, as only seen during flight (the *Ardeola grayi*), which is sometimes almost as fearless and familiar as any domestic bird, and is everywhere very abundant. A small black cormorant (*Graculus pygmaeus*) is likewise very common, but not familiar; also, in all suitable places, the common British gallinule, or moor-hen, and also the coot, and the little grebe, or dabchick. Gulls are rare, save the small hooded species (*Xema brunneicephala*); and terns are more or less common—different species, according to their particular haunts, as river or marsh terns. In the Calcutta salt-water lake, two of the rarest of British species occur abundantly—the gull-billed and the whiskered terns of our ornithologists; and there we may also commonly observe the habits of the long-shank plovers (*Himantopus*), and of that curious bird the darter, or anbinga (*Plotus melanogaster*). There is enough left for a good chapter about the birds, edible or otherwise, which are caught or shot for the provision bazaar.

Poetry.

THE DESERTED WIFE.

Was it for this that he lured her
From her tender mother's side?
Was it for this she smiled on him,
A loving and gentle bride?
Sad ending of her youth's romance!
She gazes with haggard eye
On the heartless letter which tells
Of his flight and infamy.
Then from her bosom forth she draws
The likeness that she had worn
Since first he clasped it round her neck,
On that gladsome bridal morn,
Alone in her desolate room,
Alone with her haunting fears,
Her aching, breaking heart denied
E'en the sad relief of tears.
But there is One in this dark hour
To whom her sorrow is known;
And her broken spirit turns to God
In prayer for the guilty one.

Varieties.

EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.—A conference of evangelical Christians of all countries is to be held from August 18—28 in the city of Amsterdam. There have been similar international meetings in London (1851), Paris (1855), Berlin (1857), and Geneva (1861). Among the distinguished foreigners who have accepted the invitation of the Dutch brethren we observe the names of M. Guizot, M. de Pressensé, M. Monod, Professor R. de St. Hilaire, Dr. Merle d'Aubigné, Professor Tholuck, Count Bernstorff, Dr. Krummacher, and many men of mark from all Protestant countries. The conferences will relate not only to matters of theology and evangelical effort at home and abroad, but will embrace the whole range of Christian work in relation to national prosperity and the welfare of mankind generally.

JUPITER'S SATELLITES.—An astronomical phenomenon, of which two observations only are on record, will occur during the present year—namely, the simultaneous disappearance of Jupiter's four satellites. On August 21st the planet will appear to lose its moons for nearly two hours: three of them disappear by passing across its face; the fourth will be masked by its shadow. If the weather be favourable, the disappearance and reappearance may be witnessed in this country.

"LEISURE HOUR."—In "The Flying Dragon Reporter," a paper circulated in China, Japan, and other Eastern countries, a notice of the "Leisure Hour" is thus translated by Professor Summers, the distinguished oriental scholar: "The name of this book is *Lee sha au ar*; i.e., 'leisure time,' when you have nothing to do, good to look at (to read). Every week it is printed and published in London, and every month a small part is issued; and every year a large volume complete. Within are good things to read, and beautiful pictures to look at, and they are clearly explained. This book is published by a noted benevolent society for the purpose of nourishing the heart. The price is not great, and it is disseminated among all nations."

BULL AND MOUTH.—A correspondent at the British Legation, Washington, in commenting on our paper on "Droll Signboards," is partly right in his recollection of the odd inscription in front of the "Bull and Mouth" Inn. We omitted the profane exclamation; but, whatever the legend may once have been, it now ends as quoted, "What a glorious twist," not "O what a feast."

JUVENILE MUSEUMS.—In order to encourage a taste for natural history in the northern counties of Northumberland and Durham, a committee of naturalists at Newcastle-on-Tyne have offered a series of prizes for the best collections of plants, shells, fossils, and other objects. Various conditions of competition are published for the collectors, who must be under seventeen years of age. The late Professor Henslow established similar prizes in his Cambridgeshire parish many years ago. The example deserves to be widely followed, and we hope to see prizes in our public and private schools given for natural history as well as for Latin hexameters, Greek iambs, athletic exercises, and other miscellaneous competitions.

LONGEVITY OF LAWYERS.—Dod's "Book of Dignities" affords the following extraordinary instances of longevity amongst our great men of the law:—Ex-Chancellor Brongham, 89 years; Ex-Chancellor St. Leonards, 86 years; Ex-Chancellor of Ireland, Blackburn, 85; Ex-Judge Lord Wensleydale, 85; Ex-Chief Justice of Ireland, Lefroy, 91; Ex-Chief Baron Pollock, 84; Acting Judge of Admiralty, Lushington, 85.

SOUTH AMERICAN BEEF.—Beef preserved fresh according to the system of Mr. Paris, described in the "Leisure Hour" for May, has not yet, we are informed, been offered in any large quantities for sale in the metropolitan markets. The monetary panic and other matters connected with trade prevented the plans which had been formed being carried out. We learn, however, from Mr. Paris that a company intend establishing an extensive dépôt for curing meats proposed on the plan for the supply of the British markets in Texas as well as in South America. The cattle in Texas are exceedingly numerous, and quite as fine, if not finer, than are the bullocks on the South American pampas. The Texan prairies over which the vast herds of bullocks roam, are to use no exaggerated metaphor, "the wild gardens of the world." Cured beef can be brought from Texas, we are given to understand, at a cheaper rate than from South America. Another plan has been very recently

adopted in Australia for the preservation of beef, which seems to have in it the elements of success. The carcasses are, by an artificial process, thoroughly frozen, and when in that condition, if kept at a low temperature, the meat will undergo no change. Frozen meat, it is well known, may be preserved for an indefinite period so long as it is kept frozen. All the towns and settlements far up on the Canadian lake shores are thus supplied with animal food during the long biting winters. When the lakes freeze, all communication with the larger marts, whence the supplies are obtained during the summer, is at an end; only men on snow shoes and sleighs drawn by dogs are able to traverse the ice-locked lakes. So soon as the frost fairly sets in, usually about the middle or towards the end of October, bullocks, sheep, and pigs are killed and dressed. The carcasses, when exposed to the air, freeze as hard as marble, and in that condition they are stored away for the winter consumption. A joint has to be sawn or axed off when required, then soaked in tepid water until completely thawed. This accomplished, it may be cooked in any manner that best suits the taste of the consumer. We have lived many winters upon flesh thus preserved by being naturally frozen, and can testify to its being as good and wholesome in every particular after being stored six months as though purchased freshly slaughtered from the butcher's shambles. Fish, particularly white-fish (coregonus), called by the fur traders "atti-haw-meg," which, translated, means "Reindeer of the Sea," are preserved throughout the winter at the Hudson Bay trading posts in a frozen condition. These, when thawed and cooked, are quite as good as freshly-caught fish. Dogs travelling with sleighs are constantly fed upon frozen fish; the fish require to be partially thawed by the camp fire before being given to the dogs.

J. K. L.

SHAKESPEARE SONNETS.—The old controversy about "Shakespeare's Sonnets" has been renewed in the "Athenæum," which gives a supposed novel theory of M. Philaretus Chasles. He affirms that W. H., "the begetter of the Sonnets," was William Hathaway, the poet's brother-in-law. Mr. Neil of Moffat claims earlier publication of this theory, and gives an amusing list of the various theories concerning "Mr. W. H.," that he was—1, Wm. Hart, Shakespeare's nephew (Dr. Farmer); 2, Wm. Hughes, "a man in Newall, Hews," etc. (Tyrwhitt); 3, Henry Wriothesley, Lord Southampton, by inversion of initials (Dr. Drake); 4, Wm. Herbert, Earl of Pembroke (C. A. Brown); 5, Wm. Hammond, a patron of letters of the time (F. S. Ellis); 6, W. Hall, by printer's error through insertion of period after H. in "Mr. W. Hall, happiness," etc. (J. Forsyth, Esq., editor of the "Inverness Advertiser"); 7, Wm. Hathaway (Neil and Chasles); and I think I have seen occasional but unsupported suggestions of 8, Henry Willobie, author of "Avisu," 1594, who mentions Shakespeare in his poem; 9, Henry Walker, Shakespeare's godson; 10, Wm. Houghton, author of "Englishmen for my Money," etc., among those who might have been signified; besides 11, William Himself (Bernstorff).

MAINE LIQUOR LAW.—In the city of Boston, where the Maine Liquor Law had been adopted, poverty, pauperism, insanity, blindness, idiocy, and crime applied to less than one per cent. of the population; in England they affected nearly 6 per cent. In this country there were 168,000 places where intoxicating liquors were sold—all tending to pauperize and criminalize the community. It was high time British statesmen turned their attention to the causes of pauperism, misery, and crime among the people. About £88,000,000 was spent in England every year in strong drink, £60,000,000 of it by working men. They, the Maine Liquor Law advocates in England, were determined to have the liquor traffic out of the list of licensed trades. In four counties in the States the prisons were emptied in four months after the enactment of the Maine Liquor Law. One county prison he visited would have been empty also, but that it had been turned into a hen-house, and the gaoler kept his hens in it. In another there were five prisoners, and three of them were grog-sellers. Many of the workhouses he visited were empty in the smaller towns and rural districts. He advised the English people to try the experiment, which had been successful in the States, of putting the penalties for being drunk on the man who sold the liquor and made another man drunk.—General Neal Dow at Exeter Hall.